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FOR ARA/CAR ASHLEY HEWITT
E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: CAPS, CASC, GY, OREP, (RYAN, LEO)
SUBJECT: CONGRESSMAN RYAN'S PLAN TO VISIT PEOPLE'S TEMPLE IN GUYANA
REF: STATE 241892

1. IN ACCORDANCE WITH YOUR REQUEST PARA 3 REFTEL, FOLLOWING ARE MY THOUGHTS ON THE POTENTIAL PROBLEMS WHICH CAN ARISE IN CONNECTION WITH A VISIT BY CONGRESSMAN RYAN TO GUYANA TO INSPECT THE PEOPLE'S TEMPLE COMMUNITY AT JONESTOWN. ESSENTIALLY THEY BREAK DOWN INTO THREE CATEGORIES: PHYSICAL, POLITICAL AND LEGAL.

A. PHYSICAL

I ASSUME THAT FSO RICHARD MCCOY HAS ALREADY EXPLAINED THE PHYSICAL PROBLEMS OF GETTING FROM GEORGETOWN TO JONESTOWN TO CONGRESSMAN RYAN AND HIS STAFFER. NEVERTHELESS, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THE CONGRESSMAN FULLY UNDERSTAND THE MAGNITUDE OF THESE DIFFICULTIES SO THAT HE IS NOT FRUSTRATED WHEN HE

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ARRIVES IN GUYANA AND IS CONFRONTED WITH THE REALITIES OF TRAVEL TO THE NORTHWEST REGION OF THE COUNTRY. ASSUMING THAT HE DOES CARRY THROUGH ON HIS PLAN TO COME HERE HE WILL HAVE TO EITHER CHARTER AN AIRCRAFT AT THE CODEL'S EXPENSE OR GO VIA THE RATHER PRIMITIVE AND UNRELIABLE COMMERCIAL MEANS WHICH ARE AVAILABLE IN ORDER TO GET TO JONESTOWN. THE EMBASSY HAS NO TRANSPORTATION OF ITS OWN SUITABLE FOR THE TRIP. IF COMMERCIAL MEANS ARE USED THE TRIP WOULD PROBABLY TAKE AT LEAST 2 TO 3 DAYS TO NEGOTIATE UNDER THE BEST CONDITIONS. IT WOULD INVOLVE A COMMERCIAL FLIGHT TO MACKENZIE, AN OVERLAND TRIP FROM MACKENZIE TO PORT KAITUMA, AND THEN TRAVEL VIA A 4-WHEEL DRIVE VEHICLE FROM PORT KAITUMA TO JONESTOWN. THE VEHICLE FOR THE LAST LEG WOULD HAVE TO BE FURNISHED EITHER BY THE GOVT. OF GUYANA OR THE PEOPLE'S TEMPLE. IF A CHARTER AIRCRAFT WERE USED IT WOULD IN ALL LIJELIHOOD BE POSSIBLE TO COMPLETE THE VISIT IN ONE DAY DEPENDING ON HOW LONG THE CONGRESSMAN WANTED TO STAY IN JONESTOWN. IT SHOULD BE REMEMMBERED THAT EVEN IF A CHARTER AIRCRAFT IS USED,

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GROUND TRANSPORTATION FROM THE AIRSTRIP TO JONESTOWN AND RETURN WOULD HAVE TO BE PROVIDED BY TEE GOG OR PEOPLE'S TEMPLE. LEATELY THERE HAVE ALSO BEEN PROBLEMS INVOLVING THE AVAILABILITY OF CHARTER AIRCRAFT AND THE PHYSICAL CONDITION OF THE AIRSTRIP AT PORT KAITUMA. THESE SHOULD ALSO BE KEPT IN MIND.

B. POLITICAL

AS YOU WILL HAVE SEEN FROM OUR UNCLASSIFIED TELEGRAM 3098 ATTORNEY MARK LANE PAID A VISIT TO GUYANA LAST WEEK DURING WHICH HE GAVE A PRESS CONFERENCE IN WHICH HE CHARGED THAT CERTAIN AGENCIES OF THE USG WERE CONSPIRING TO DESTROY BISHOP JONES AND THE PEOPLE'S

TEMPLE. HE INDICATED IN HIS PRESS CONFERENCE THAT HE WAS CONSIDERING THE FILING OF CIVIL SUITS FOR DAMAGES ON BEHALF OF THE PEOPLE'S TEMPLE AGAINST THE ATTORNEY GENERAL AND VARIOUS FEDERAL AGENCIES. CONGRESSMAN RYAN, IF HE IS NOT ALREADY AWARE, SHOULD BE APPRISED OF THIS DEVELOPMENT.

IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT BEFORE UNDERTAKING ANY TRIP TO GEORGETOWN WITH THE EXPECTATION THAT HE WILL BE ABLE TO VISIT JONESTOWN COMMUNITY, CONGRESSMAN RYAN SHOULD FIRST OBTAIN AGREEMENT FROM THE PEOPLE'S TEMPLE TO SUCH A VISIT. THE PEOPLE'S TEMPLE IS OCCUPYING LAND IN GUYANA WHICH WAS MADE AVAILABLE TO THEM BY THE GOVERNMENT. THEY HAVE LEGAL POSSESSION OF THIS LAND AND HAVE DEMOMSTRATED IN THE PAST A WILLINGNESS EITHER TO PERMIT OR DENY ACCESS TO INDIVIDUALS SEEKING TO VISIT THE COMMUNITY. IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT THE GOG IS PREPARED TO HONOR THE WISHES OF THE PEOPLE'S TEMPLE MANAGEMENT IN EXERCISING ITS CONTROL OVER THIS COMMUNITY. IT IS UNLIKELY THEREFORE THAT THE GUYANESE GOVERNMENT WOULD ATTEMPT TO FORCE ENTRY ON BEHALF OF CONGRESSMAN RYAN OR ANY OTHER OUTSIDER IF THE MANAGEMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S TEMPLE INDICATED AN UNWILLINGNESS TO RECEIVE SUCH VISITORS.

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C. LEGAL
THE EMBASSY HAS ALWAYS TAKEN A POSITION VIS-A-VIS THE PEOPLE'S TEMPLE AND THE COMMUNITY AT JONESTOWN THAT OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH IT AND WITH THE AMERICAN CITIZENS RESIDING THERE IS IDENTICAL WITH OUR RELATIONSHIP TO ANY OTHER AMERICAN CITIZEN OR CITIZENS IN GUYANA, AS PROVIDED FOR IN FOREIGN SERVICE REGULATIONS. ACCORDINGLY, WE HAVE PROVIDED CONSULAR SERVICES TO THE COMMUNITY AND HAVE RESPONDED TO REQUESTS FROM NEXT OF KIN IN THE U.S. IN DIRECTING WELFARE WHEREABOUTS INQUIRIES TO THE PEOPLE'S TEMPLE AND THE AMCIT RESIDENTS OF JONESTOWN. WE HAVE INSTITUTED A SERIES OF QUARTERLY VISITS, WITH THE AGREEMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S TEMPLE, TO PERFORM SUCH SERVICES. IN THE DISCHARGE OF OUR RESPONSIBILITIES WE HAVE BORNE PARTICULARLY IN MIND THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE PRIVACY ACT AND THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT. I AM SURE THAT CONGRESSMAN RYAN AND HIS STAFF ARE AWARE OF THE PROVISIONS OF THESE TWO LAWS AND CAN APPRECIATE THEIR POSSIBLE APPLICATION TO THE PRESENT CASE.
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2. WE OF COURSE STAND READY TO PROVIDE ANY APPROPRIATE ASSISTANCE TO CONGRESSMAN RYAN AND HIS PARTY SHOULD THEY DECIDE TO VISIT GEORGETOWN. IN ORDER TO AVOID ANY CONFUSION, I THINK IT IMPORTANT THAT THE POINTS SET FORTH ABOVE BE DISCUSSED IN DETAIL WITH THEM SO THAT THE CONGRESSMAN AND HIS PARTY WILL BE UNDER NO MISAPPREHENSION WHEN THEY ARRIVE. FURTHER, I BELIEVE IT WOULD BE USEFUL AND DESIRABLE FOR A DEPARTMENT LAWYER FROM THE STAFF OF THE LEGAL ADVISER TO ACCOMPANY THE CODEL TO GUYANA AND JONESTOWN.
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